production, consumption and export of iron-ore during the last three years are as under:

(Qty: in million tonnes)

Year	Production	Consumption	Export
2002-03	99.072	49.98	48.02
2003-04	120.60	51.62	62.57
2004-05 (Provl.)	142.7	54.00*	78.14

Source: MMTC for exports, Indian Bureau of Mines for Production, Dang Committee Report (2005) for consumption. * as per estimates of Ministry of Steel.

(b) Government has not made any projections for iron ore consumption and exports covering the next 3 years. However, long term projections have been made in the National Steel Policy. As per the National Steel Policy total domestic demand for iron ore is estimated at 190 million tonnes by 2019-2020. Exports are estimated at 100 million tonnes by the same year.

Coal Crises with Sponge Iron Industry

3505. SHRIMATI JAMANA DEVI BARUPAL:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the country's sponge iron industry, the largest in the world with an annual production of ten million tonnes and accounting for 17.84 per cent of global production, is affected due to coal crises;

(b) whether 54 per cent of sponge iron produced here is coal based while 45 per cent is gas based;

(c) the steps Government propose to take to help the industry which is in group of coal prices;

(d) whether any concrete proposal has been worked out in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and to what extent the industry has come out of the group?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) No, Sir. Sponge iron production has increased by about 8.8% during April-November, 2005 as compared to the corresponding period of the previous year.

(b) As.per available information, 54% of sponge iron was produced by coal based sponge iron units and 46% was produced by gas based units in 2004-05.

(c) to (e) Process of providing coal linkages to coal based sponge iron units has been restored. Besides this, captive coal blocks are also allocated to manufacturers' of sponge iron.

Expansion of VSP

3506. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have cleared the expansion plans of Vizag Steel Plant;

(b) if so, the main proposals of the plans;

(c) the amount involved in each expansion plan; and

. (d) by what time, they are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The Government on 28th October, 2005 has approved the expansion plan of Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd. (RINL), Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (VSP) at an estimated revised cost of Rs. 8692 crores (base June 2005 prices) for increasing its liquid steel capacity from 3 million tonnes to 6.3 million tonnes per annum. The entire expansion plan is likely to be completed by October, 2009.